

**CHARLES TAYLOR MASTER
MECHANIC'S AWARD**

**Fairbanks Flight Standards District
Office Honoree 1999**

FRANCIS ROSS



ROSS, FRANCIS (FRANK). Frank was born June 19, 1928, on a fruit and poultry farm in Belchertown, Massachusetts. His aviation career began during a three year stint in the U.S. Navy when he served as a Quartermaster Signalman Third Class aboard the USS Albany. One of his duties was to go to the flight deck to signal the helicopters for takeoffs and landings. Frank got out of the Navy in May 1950, and he and Ann were married on July 15, 1950. They have three children and one grandson.

Frank attended the New England Aircraft School at Boston University from January 1951 - June 1952. He was part of the first class of aircraft mechanics to go through Boston University's aircraft school. While attending this school, he also worked as a cleaner on midnight shifts for Northeast Airlines. When the Korean War broke out, his hours at school changed and he had to quit his position at Northeast Airlines. Frank received his Airframe and Power plant Licenses from this training.

From August 1951 - April 1953, Frank worked as a mechanic for TWA at

Idlewild International Airport (now Kennedy International Airport) maintaining 049 through 1049G Lockheed Constellations. In 1953 he switched to Northeast Airlines in Boston, Massachusetts, because Ann was pregnant and wanted to live closer to family. Frank worked his way up from mechanic to lead mechanic to inspection foreman. In the late 1950s, he transferred with his family to sunny Florida. Northeast merged with Delta Airlines in 1972. Frank worked as an inspection foreman until his retirement from Delta in 1982. In his off hours, he worked with another inspector learning maintenance of small aircraft. He took the test and received his Inspection Authorization.

Frank and his family visited Alaska on vacation many times over the years. In August of 1982, he decided to semi-retire in Alaska. He started his own aircraft maintenance business, Frank's Aviation Service, in Fairbanks. One of his many customers was Bill Lentsch, owner of Tamarack Air, Ltd. In May of 1988, Frank earned his private pilot's license in order to enjoy more of Alaska and to be able to fly out and recover downed aircraft. He also purchased a wrecked Cessna 170 and rebuilt it for himself. His son still flies this aircraft in Florida.

Today Frank works on his Cessna 170 in Florida and occasionally works with the same man who started him on small aircraft maintenance in the 1970s.